

# **Highlights**

- **Eliminates transportation maintenance backlog within 20 years**
- **Seattle will:**
  - **Pave city streets**
  - **Repair/seismically upgrade bridges**
  - **Increase pedestrian & bike safety**
  - **Build sidewalks to parks & schools**
  - **Build bike trails**
  - **Improve transit**
  - **Improve freight delivery**
- **20-year program generates \$65 million in its first full year (2008):**
  - **Levy lid lift raises \$46 million**
  - **New 10% commercial-parking tax raises \$13 million**
  - **New \$25 per FTE business transportation tax raises \$5.5 million**

# **Where the Money Goes**

## **(First Full Year)**

- \$19 million for Paving City Streets**
- \$13.5 million for Bridges & Structures**
- \$6 million for Signs, Signals & Safety**
- \$2.5 million for Sidewalks, Trails, Walkways & Stairways**
- \$13.9 million for Transit, Freight & Pedestrian Corridors**
- \$5.7 million for Pedestrians, Bikes & Safety**
- \$2 million for Trees & Landscaping**
- \$1.9 million for Neighborhood Services**

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**Total: \$65 million**

# What the Package Buys

## • **\$19 million for Paving City Streets**

- Resurfaces, restores or replaces up to 50 lane-miles of arterial streets per year. After 20 years, eliminates the City's arterial street maintenance backlog.

## • **\$13.5 million for Bridges & Structures**

- Rehabilitates/replaces 12 bridges over 20 years:
  - Airport over ARGO RR Yard Br.
  - 15th NE & NE 105th St. Br.
  - Fauntleroy Expressway
  - E. Duwamish Waterway Br.
  - Albro over Airport Way Br.
  - Jose Rizal Bridge (bridge connecting 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. to Beacon Hill)
  - West Seattle Highlevel Br.
  - Ballard Br. North Approach
  - East Interlaken Blvd
  - Yesler Way @ 4th
  - NE 45th Viaduct
  - 2nd Ave Extension
  - Also funds 100 additional structural repairs each year
- Seismically retrofits 13 bridges over 20 years:
  - Ballard Bascule Bridge
  - Fauntleroy Expressway
  - Fremont Bascule Bridge
  - 4th Ave S, Jackson St to Airport Way
  - 2nd Ave Extension
  - Jackson St., 4th to 5th Ave
  - Albro over Airport Way
  - Airport Way, 4th Ave to 5th Ave
  - NE 45th Street Viaduct East Approach
  - 1st Ave S. over ARGO RR Yard,
  - 4th Ave South over ARGO RR Yard
  - Airport Way over AGRO
  - Admiral Way Bridge

- **\$6 million for Signs, Signals & Safety**

- Replaces small, faded street & regulatory signs with new, larger, reflective signs. Replaces street-name sign at all 17,000 non-signalized intersections by 2014. Restripes 5,000 crosswalks on 5.5 year cycle (vs. current 17-year cycle) meeting federal standards.
- Improves preventive maintenance program – will conform to industry standards, intersection beacons at schools will receive routine maintenance; improves signal timing; rebuilds 20 traffic signals/beacons each year; replaces 20 obsolete signal controllers/cabinets each year
- Replaces 70,000 feet of aging guardrails and 41 obsolete crash cushions over 20 years.

- **\$2.5 million for Sidewalks, Trails, Walkways & Stairways**

- Repairs/restores 3 miles of sidewalks per year; maintains trails.
- Rehabilitates six stairways annually.

- **\$13.9 million for Transit, Freight & Pedestrian Corridors**

- City's match to leverage more transit hours from King County's "Transit Now" package.
- Creates bus rapid transit corridors:
  - Aurora Avenue N
  - Ballard Corridor (15th Ave NW, Elliott Ave)
  - West Seattle Corridor (Fauntleroy, Avalon, Alaska)
- Makes transit, pedestrian, bicycle & safety improvements on other key transit corridors in the city:
  - Northgate Way
  - Montlake/23rd/24th
  - Greenwood Ave N
  - Rainier Ave S

- Supports City's funding contribution to 4 major projects improving downtown access:
  - *South Spokane Street Viaduct*. Widens & rehabilitates this roadway, including a dedicated transit-only lane, as well as a general-purpose lane, from the structure down to Fourth Avenue into downtown Seattle. Improves freight & transit mobility, especially when the Alaskan Way Viaduct closes. (\$30 million)
  - *South Lander Street Bridge*. Builds a bridge over the railroad tracks, providing east-west connectivity for commuter & freight traffic in the area, improving travel time between the port & local businesses. Also improves pedestrian access to a proposed nearby light rail station. (\$20 million)
  - *King Street Station*. Makes investments needed to serve a new generation of train, light rail and bus riders, ensuring the station remains a vital transportation hub and portal to Seattle for the century to come. (\$25 million)
  - *Two-Way Mercer*. Widens Mercer Street between I-5 and Dexter Avenue North to accommodate three lanes of travel in each direction, parking, sidewalks & a median with left-turn lanes. Valley Street will be narrowed to a two-lane, two-way street. (\$30 million)

## • **\$5.7 million for Pedestrians, Bikes & Safety**

- New "Safe Routes to Schools" program improves routes near elementary schools by installing signs, markings, sidewalks, crosswalks and traffic signals at three to five schools per year. Installs two new signals each year and improves left-turn (green arrow) at two high-hazard intersections per year. Installs 80 pedestrian countdown signal heads at 10 intersections per year.
- Builds and improves sidewalks and walkways in high pedestrian traffic and/or high-hazard locations. Supports development and implementation of Pedestrian Master Plan (to be completed in 2007).
- Completes remaining 6.5 miles of trails on Burke Gilman, Chief Sealth, Mountains-to-Sound, and other trails. Provides bike lanes and bike route signing in accordance with the Bicycle Master Plan (to be completed in 2007).

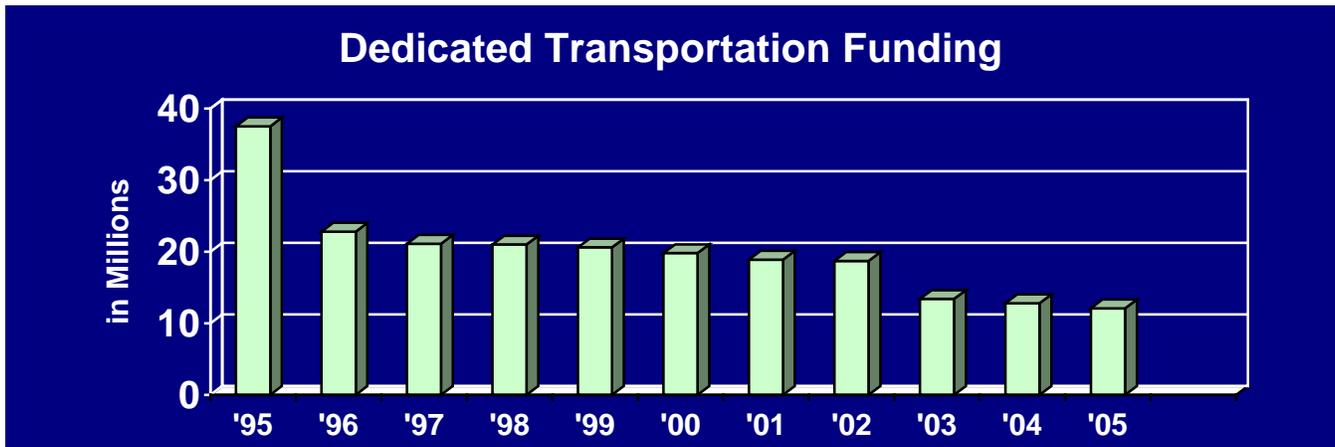
## • **\$2 million for Trees & Landscaping**

- Shortens pruning cycle from 19 years to recommended standard of 7 to 8 years. Plants 2,000 new trees per year.
- Improves condition of City landscaping; plants more bulbs & other perennials in medians.

## • **\$1.9 million for Neighborhood Services**

- Increases street sweeping frequency in neighborhood business districts from an average of once per month to an average of twice per month.
- Restores residential street sweeping, cleaning every curbed space at least twice a year. This improves water quality and neighborhood livability.
- Increases frequency of mowing and vegetation control on roadside areas, such as median strips and road shoulders, from once per year to twice per year. This improves sight distances and aesthetics.
- Ensures 48-hour response and removal of graffiti on all signs and traffic infrastructure, including all non-electrical signs, pay stations, posts, signal cabinets, crash cushions, signals and pavements.

# Seattle's Transportation Challenge



**Dedicated revenue decrease of 66% in the last 10 years, from \$37.5 million in 1995 to \$11.8 million in 2005:**

- 1995 – loss of the Street Utility Fee (a \$13.4 million annual loss).
- 2003 – loss of the Vehicle License Fee (a \$5.4 million direct annual loss, with additional annual losses of \$2 million to \$3 million of leveraged funds).
- City's fuel tax revenues have decreased in real terms due to inflation, annexations & incorporations (\$18.2 million in 1995 vs. \$11.8 million in 2005)

**Annual loss: about \$25 million**

# What We've Done So Far

- To make up for the transportation revenue loss – about \$25 million annually – the Mayor & City Council more than tripled the amount of general revenues going to transportation (from \$14 million in 1995 to \$45.1 million in 2005\*).
- While this infusion kept transportation funding levels about even, it is not enough to adequately maintain the system.
- Seattle now faces a transportation maintenance backlog of more than \$500 million.
- Mayor Greg Nickels' 2006 Transportation Initiative will generate revenue for transportation system maintenance & improvements, allowing the City to eliminate the backlog.

*\*Adjusted for inflation*

# How We'll Pay For It

**Mayor Nickels has proposed funding his long-term transportation initiative by increasing property taxes, and creating a new business tax and a new commercial parking tax:**

- Property taxes would be increased under a levy lid lift, which would collect \$46 million in its first full year.
- A 10 percent tax would be collected on commercial parking within Seattle. This would be a permanent revenue source.  
*(For more details, please see "Proposed Commercial Parking Tax Overview.")*
- An annual business transportation tax equivalent to \$25 per-full-time employee would be imposed on companies doing business in Seattle. This would also be a permanent source. Employers will receive an exemption for all FTEs for whom they provide transit pass subsidies.  
*(For more details, please see "Proposed Business Transportation Tax Overview.")*

# Projected Revenues

- Mayor’s initiative expected to raise about \$65 million in its first full year of implementation.
- Difficult to estimate revenues from parking fee & business tax in distant future.
- Proposed levy lid lift will grow at the rate of construction inflation (capped at 5 percent per year) in the early years, so future levy amounts cannot be determined in advance.
- Rough estimate of the overall cumulative revenue over 20 years is \$1.8 billion.

<b>Projected Revenues</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Levy</b>	<b>Commercial Parking Tax</b>	<b>Business Transportation Tax</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2007</b>	\$46 million	\$10.5 million	\$0 <i>(Collection begins in 2008)</i>	\$56 million
<b>2026</b>	\$82 million	\$30 million	\$8 million	\$120 million

# Levy Lid Lift Costs

- The levy will cost the owner of a median-valued Seattle home \$195 during the first year at a tax rate of 45.1 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The rate is projected to average 34.9 cents over the life of the program.
- Even with the property tax increase proposed for “Bridging the Gap,” Seattle property owners will still pay less in property tax than they would have had Initiative 747 not been approved.
- Assuming I-747 – which restricts annual property tax growth to 1 percent a year plus new construction – had not gone into effect, the City would have approximately \$58 million more in property tax revenue in 2007 than will actually be the case.
- This additional tax revenue would have been available to help Seattle keep up with its transportation needs. Approximately 75% of the money raised by the levy will be dedicated to reducing the maintenance backlog.

# Why impose new business & parking taxes?

- According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 563,400 people live in Seattle.
- About half of those residents, 230,300, work in the city and each day another 238,500 workers commute to jobs inside Seattle from their residences outside the city limits.
- More than half of the people who commute into Seattle drive their cars.
- These cars place significant demands on the city's transportation system.
- It is appropriate that drivers & companies whose employees use our transportation system help pay for its maintenance and improvement.
- Under the Mayor's proposal, these taxes will generate revenue for transportation system maintenance and improvements.

# What About Oversight?

- Mayor Nickels plans to appoint a Levy Oversight Committee, approved by the City Council, to ensure accountability.
- Committee will be composed of people from outside City government, as well as key City officials.